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From: Melvin A. de la Motte, Jr. [mailto:mr.mel@sbcglobal.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, March 01, 2005 7:45 PM  
To: MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov  
Subject: MLPAComments: Comments on DRAFT MASTER-PLAN

Please accept the attached letter as comment on the proposed Master-plan.

We understand these comments are due today.

The Central Coast Fisheries Conservation Coalition has thousands of members on the Central Coast. We will be keenly effected by the MLPA process. Please give careful consideration to our comments.

Melvin A. de la Motte, Jr.  
President of Central Coast Fisheries Conservation Coalition



*Protect Your  
Right to Fish*

# CCFCC

## Central Coast Fisheries Conservation Coalition

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March 1, 2005

California MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force

Phillip L. Isenberg, Chairman

Dr. Fernando J. Guerra

William W. Anderson

Meg Caldwell

Ann D'Amato

Susan Golding

Dr. Jane G. Pisano

Catherine Reheis-Boyd

Douglas P. Wheeler

### **Re: MLPA Draft Master Plan**

Dr. Mr. Isenberg and other panel members:

Let me preface my remarks by referring you back to our letter of October 20, 2004 directed to each of you. At that time we expressed our concerns and reservations about contributions from "outside interest groups." We were fearful that staff would be influenced by the environmental groups funding the lion's share of the project. The draft master plan suggests that our worries were well-founded. It is clear that the staff is running the show and is taking the BRTF far beyond the confines of the legislation. Let me point out some undeniable facts:

1. Not a single member of the BRTF and not a single member of the executive staff were present in Morro Bay two weeks ago when 150-200 people showed up to give "public comment."
2. Only four members of the BRTF were present last Tuesday in Monterey at the regularly scheduled meeting of the BRTF; and then only two members the next day.
3. It is clear that the task force is not only failing to show up at meetings, but are only tangentially involved in this process. Unless they get their staff back on track, it will appear that the task force is really "window-dressing" for this environmentalist-driven and funded project.
4. It is very clear that this master plan is strictly a product of MLPA staff that are in the hip-pocket of outside interest groups. The master plan is so far

removed from spirit and letter of the MLPA law that one would wonder if the plan really relates to the 1999 legislation.

5. It seems clear that the BRTF has neither the time nor inclination to do a fair scrutiny of this draft master plan. Nevertheless, we will make the following suggestions.

## **Recommendations**

1. **Send the draft master plan back for complete revision:** Our organization once again encourages the BRTF to carefully review the 1999 MLPA legislation. The draft master plan is so far removed from the spirit and letter of the law, that the whole draft-plan should be rejected. Here are key points the BRTF should make in rejecting this draft plan:

- **The MLPA suggests at the very beginning that the key purpose of the legislation is to examine and evaluate existing MPAs.** The draft master plan does not focus on this key purpose of the legislation
- **The BRTF should demand that the draft master plan have a clear-cut process of determining what study, evaluation, research and education cannot be gleaned from existing MPAs before considering new or additional MPAs**
- **The BRTF should compel staff to give equal consideration to State Marine Parks and State Marine Conservation Areas.** It is so obvious that this draft plan is being “ghost-written” by outside interest groups, because the draft plan heavily promotes no-take marine reserves.

2. **Demand that new draft consider budgetary restraints:** Again, we encourage each of you to look at that earlier letter dated October 20, 2004. We explained in detail the colossal failure of the *Nearshore Fishery Management Plan*. That is another governmental plan where the drafters had no consideration to budgetary restraints. They created a plan that was grandiose in scope and ambitious in detail, but is now **dead in the water!** It is dead in the water because there was no parallel consideration of budget issues at each stage of the plan.

It would be an absurdity for any business to go forward with a business plan without consideration to budgetary restraints. If this BRTF goes forward with this project without consideration for how future monitoring, study, evaluation and oversight will be funded, then it is guaranteed that as soon as restrictive and repressive “no-take” preserves are installed, the environmental money will dry up and there will be no funding for monitoring, oversight and review. However the environmental groups will cry and scream that the no-take preserves must remain in place in an abundance of caution, regardless of any lack of funding. We have seen this as the target goal right from the start. We hope this panel does not become pawns in this scheme.

3. **Demand that new draft be heavily based on science and credible data as only basis for creating any new or additional MPAs:** For many years, fishermen who are keenly interested in preserving fishing as both a livelihood and sport have

known that the nearshore fishery in California is healthy and thriving. In other parts of the country, MPAs are being touted as a solution to a problem of our declining oceans. There is no evidence at all that such condition exists in California nearshore waters. We invite this panel to inquire of the Dept. of Fish & Game as to whether there are any “overfished” species in nearshore waters. There are none! The most important thing this panel can do is require that science and reliable data be a condition precedent to any new or additional MPAs. The draft master plan is extremely weak in its requirement for science and reliable data as a justification for any new or additional MPAs.

Fishermen in California firmly believe that outside interest groups who have put up the funding for the MLPA are the driving force behind every aspect of this project. Secretary Mike Chrisman said that this whole process would be “transparent” and the public would be heavily involved in the process. So far, the public has appeared at meetings and few if any BRTF members have even been present. The “transparency” Mr. Chrisman talks about is clearly revealing that the environmental money-backers are calling the tune at every stage, including drafting of the master plan. We are now challenging the whole panel to see if you will just rubber-stamp this staff-created plan ... or send it back to the drawing board for a major overhaul.

Sincerely,

/s/

Melvin A. de la Motte, Jr.  
President of CCFCC